(d) if so, the steps Government propose to take to improve bus service for commuters going to Central Secretariat and back?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI K. P. UNNIKRISHNAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. The route numbers 920 and 973 are serving the area well. These two routes originating from Keshavpuram Water Tank provide direct link to Palika Kendra serving Kendriya Terminal enroute, with regular frequency of 26 minutes (peak)/52 minutes (non-peak).

As for services during the period 8.45 A.M. to 9.45 A.M., the services operating are 0852 hours trip on route 920 and 0944 hours trip on route 973 from Keshavpuram Water Tank to Palika Kendra. Besides, a trip at 0900 hours on route 920 from Pocket B-3, Keshavpuram is also available for Palika Kendra.

Road travel tax for private buses

1639. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the various State authorities levy road travel tax at very high rates for passenger buses/private tourist buses;

(b) whether it is a fact that such buses have to perforce halt at various State borders for long periods in order to clear the tax levies causing great inconvenience to the tourists besides increasing their travel costs; and

(c) if so, what steps are being taken to remove these lacunae in handling road travel by private buses?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI K. P. UNNIKRISHNAN): (a) to (c) Motor vehicular tax, commonly known as road tax, is a State subject in terms of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India. Rates of taxes levied by the State Governments vary from State to State. The dues payable by a passenger bus or a tourist bus operating on inter-State route are checked at the State-borders by the respective authorities. This does involve detention time at the border-posts and inconvenience to tourist passengers. In order to facilitate through movement of vehicles covered under all-India tourist vehicle permits, the proposal of charging of a uniform composite fee, in lieu of tax, per playing State and its collection at one point namely the Home State, was discussed by the Transport Development Council in its meeting in November 1988. However, no consensus could be reached. The matter was decided to be reviewed later. It is proposed for the ensuing meeting of the Council.

Safeguarding the life and property of people of Indian origin in Kenya

1640. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there was any damage to the life and property of Indians/Kenyans of Indian origin living in Kenya during the recent rioting; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken to safeguard the life and property of such people?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH): (a) There was no damage to the life of Indians. However during the rioting some shops were attacked including some belonging to Indians. No specific targeting of Indians was observed. No specific complaint has been received by Indian Associations or by the High Commission on looting/damage.

(b) Our High Commission in Nairobi is in constant touch with the various Indian Associations and local authorities.